

PRIMARY POINT

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In 1980, when I first came to this country, I had no temple, food or home. I was very poor. Arriving in New York City, Master Soen Sa Nim opened his Zen Center to me. He was the first Zen Master in America to help. Soen Sa Nim has said, "When you become a monk, you become a millionaire. Any temple you enter is your home—one million; any food which is needed, is given—two million; and all the clothes you will ever wear are provided—three million."

Our Sangha is a large family. Masters, when spreading the Dharma, bring this family close together. Students, when practicing Buddhism, bring the Dharma to life. When Soen Sa Nim gave me refuge in his New York City Temple, he became a living Buddha.

It is my prayer that all Buddhists will bow

IN CELEBRATION OF SOEN SA NIM'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

Selections from the tribute book compiled by Diana Clark

together in the Dharma, that we may all attain Buddha Nature, and lasting peace.

Ven. Maha Ghosananda
New England Khmer Buddhist Society

Congratulating 60th Birthday of Seung Sahn Zen Master

"Golden Staff Traverses
Endless miles of emptiness

*Harmonizing with clouds, with rain --
Nurturing true mind
Atop mountain-firm vows
The scenery is unique:
Unmeasurable prosperity, infinite life,
Deep is the ocean of merit."*

Ven. Hakaya Taizan Maizumi Roshi
Zen Center of Los Angeles

[this is a translation of the Chinese poem]

DO YOU SEE THIS?

An Appreciation of Tubby Teacher

Tubby Teacher raised his hand before the Maui Sangha. "Do you see this?" he cried out. I was astonished, and so was everybody else.

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Photo Courtesy of Lexington Zen Center

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- Death and Dying: The Tibetan Tradition*
- How the Swans Came to the Lake, 2nd edition*
- Moon in a Dewdrop: writings of Zen Master Dogen*

THE SCENERY OF ZEN

Jakusho Kwong Roshi, Dharma successor to Suzuki Roshi's lineage and Abbot of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center in northern California, has jointly led several sitting and chanting retreats in the past several years with Zen Master Seung Sahn. In these retreats the Zen styles of the two teachers (Japanese and Korean) were blended and students of both teachers practiced together. In April 1984 Roshi and his wife Laura visited the Providence Zen Center. The following exchange occurred between the Kwongs, Zen Master Seung Sahn, and teachers and residents of PZC. Roshi was asked to talk about his life and how he started practicing and teaching Zen.

(Holding the ceremonial Zen stick above his head, Jacob brings the point of it down on the altar table with force.)

Budda saw a star, got a great enlightenment. (Hits the altar again)

Guchi's attendant saw a finger, got a great enlightenment. (Hits the altar a third time)

Today we celebrate Buddha's enlightenment, but we also celebrate Guchi's attendant's enlightenment. Which one is greater? Which one?

Hoh!

A dialogue with Jakusho Kwong, Roshi Abbot of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center

Kwong Roshi: This is actually our first time on the other end of America, and our first time here at your Zen Center in Rhode Island. Your hospitality, life, simpleness and directness is very commendable....

Reflecting back when I was three years old, I was a frail child, and when I went to just cry by myself, the Scotty dog next door would follow me and we would cry togeth-

er. (laughter) The dog knows. The dog was very kind and compassionate. He didn't tell anyone. We shared this mutual secret of truth and seemingly, weakness. I think it [one's motivation for practice] goes back further than how we began [actually] practicing, what our ideas were when we began,

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THE PILGRIMAGE TO AWAKENING

By Master Dharma Teacher Jacob Perl

The following formal Dharma speech was given at Buddha's Enlightenment Day ceremonies at the Providence Zen Center on December 6, 1986.

Today is Saturday. This is the traditional form. Everybody is familiar with it. We celebrate this experi-

ence because it's worth celebrating. Shaky-muni Buddha—Shakymuni means "the awakened one." That means, prior to his,

enlightenment experience, he was not awake, he was asleep. In the Buddhist scriptures we often read that the way we live is as if in a dream. So it is our job, according to the Buddha and the patriarchs, to awaken from this dream.

That's what happened one day to this person called Gautama Buddha. That's also what happened to Guchi's attendant. So we celebrate their experience, but of course, this experience is not just limited to Buddha or Guchi's attendant. At any moment this

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Scenery of Zen

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and what our ideas and experiences are now. How it seems to change!

Over a period of 24 years [of practicing] I've become more aware of my foolishness. (laughter) Don't know much about Zen anymore. But I do know going straight [practicing] is very immaculate and an undeniable truth that Dharma is good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end. How did I see it, and how did I begin exploring? Maybe [I did that] in a more simple way.

For instance, doing zazen [meditation] practice and trying to attain no-mindedness, there is a way to get on that wavelength, just like when you bow and all the thoughts stop at the end of your exhalation. There is a way to stay on that somehow without this mind projecting into and interfering with it. Somehow I thought that was zazen, that was good zazen when that happened.

I read a book called *Approach to Zen* written by Uchiyama Roshi (who was then the Abbot at Antai-ji in Japan) in which he described zazen from his practice of maybe 40 or 50 years. It was quite inspiring to me, because he said, first of all there's the zazen line which you try to maintain, to jump on. But inevitably, "sweep as you will, you cannot empty the mind." [a quote from Keizan Zen Master] This is a very important statement. As soon as you jump onto that line, it [mind] inevitably goes off, just in one thought. That's not bad, one thought, which means the mind has stopped thinking. But then two thoughts is thinking, three thoughts is sequential, and it gets longer and longer. Before you know it, the bell rings and zazen is over.

The other aspect was sleeping. He describes sleeping very much the same as thinking. First is sleeping, then you begin dreaming, three, four... So the most difficult things in Zen practice are sleeping and thinking. He calls them "the scenery of zazen." If you just have one thought, that's very good. Just the scenery of zazen. But he subtly infers that zazen is to wake up within your zazen. So whether it's one thought or two, thinking in the dreaming stage, or thoughts in the thinking stage, it's all just scenery; you must accept your present condition.

You sit there and you wake up. You return to your breath, or breathing from your tanden [lower abdomen] or whatever you're doing in your zazen. But the point is, you can wake up and return. That's the whole point of zazen, on a very subtle basis. By waking up, your everyday life will have some kind of strong root and most likely will not be tossed by the rains and winds of our everyday life experiences. That kind of explanation of zazen practice is very important, and seeing that when we sit down, we are still alive and thinking will naturally happen. If there's no thought, there's no scenery, there's no life. So when there is life as in sitting, there is also scenery. The point is just to WAKE UP back to zazen.... Further there is the stage of no thinking, no scenery, no life, no sitting, and no you! This is also the scenery of zazen.

Q. I heard that you and Soen Sa Nim had a retreat together last year, and I was wondering whether you thought that was helpful?
Kwong Roshi: It's so important that we all work together, because if we can't, how can we have world peace? It's wonderful. Sometimes we get so busy, so narrow-minded just in our own way. When you have another group coming, especially Soen Sa Nim, to do it another way is very wonderful. It's just like the many manifestations in this room, we are many manifestations of some deep way. I like it very much. May we do it forever! (Laughs) Every year.
Soen Sa Nim: Every year.

Q. What is your style of sitting practice?
Kwong Roshi: Shikantaza. "Shikan" means "wholeheartedly" or "100%" "Ta" means—(Roshi hits the floor with his hand). "Za" means sit. Soen Sa Nim once

mentioned to me that in China, where the term came from, there were originally four more characters, "ta jo i hen," which means become one. So basically—(Roshi demonstrates the sitting posture). Or, Gutei's holding up one finger, or you answering when someone calls your name.

Q. When you sit, do you use some mantra, like we do here, or some way to keep your mind?

Kwong Roshi: Yes. Shikantaza is as I've described earlier: just one thought, two thoughts, thinking....wake up. Just exactly what's going on in your mind.

Soen Sa Nim: Shikantaza means, use a kong-an or not, doesn't matter. Hit your true self, become empty. You must "hit," then become empty mind and just sit. Hit and just sit is not enough. Anytime there is subject and object, or inside and outside, you must hit and become one. That means, when you see this world, just world and you become one. When you see the sky, sky and you become one. That's "hit, become one."

Q. Are people happy there?

Kwong Roshi: Probably not. (laughter) I don't think so. There is some happiness, of course, but when the potatoes rub together, some skin falls off. That's how it is. (laughter) Zen is not only to accommodate others, but also to encounter the self; many things come with that. Just as a beautiful peace is formed only through the condition of irritation.

Soen Sa Nim: All day long cry, cry, cry. (laughter)

Q. How did you start teaching?

Kwong Roshi: I was ordained in 1970. Also I worked in commercial art. I went to one early training period at Tassajara, and Suzuki Roshi said to everyone, cut your hair maybe three fingers [long]. So Laura cut my hair, I looked like a porcupine. So she said I might as well cut it all off. When I came back to work, the businessmen asked what happened. They didn't want me there. My form didn't fit the consumer world. So I had to find some other way to provide for my family.

Events Marking Soen Sa Nim's 60th Birthday

In The U.S.A.: A Special Congress and Zen Master Seung Sahn's Birthday

celebration will take place from Friday, July 31 to Sunday, August 2 at the Providence Zen Center. The Fifth Annual Kwan Um Zen Congress will be held at this time: members and friends from all over the country come together to strengthen their practice, discuss issues, and simply have fun.

Saturday afternoon people will gather for the birthday ceremony honoring Zen Master Seung Sahn on his 60th birthday and commemorating his 15 years of teaching in the West. Many special guests are expected to attend, including friends from other Buddhist schools. Saturday evening the Dharma Room will become a stage: there will be musical entertainment, and each Zen Center will present a short skit or song as tribute to Zen Master Seung Sahn.

The entire weekend promises to be fun-filled: a special experience of sangha. For further information, contact your local Zen Center or the Kwan Um Zen School.

In Korea: "The Whole World Is a Single Flower," a special gathering, will take place on August 27 and 28 at Su Dok Sah, a temple where Zen Master Seung Sahn trained. The schedule will include sitting, kido chanting, and talks on different aspects of practice. Special guests will include Taizan Maezumi, Roshi; Jakusho Kwong, Roshi; Ven. Maha Ghosananda; and Dharma Master Ji Kwang Poep Sa (Dr. Danette Choi). Master Dharma Teachers, monks, and many students of the Kwan Um Zen School are expected to attend.

On August 29 the **International Young Buddhist Peace Symposium** will be held in Seoul. Many dignitaries from the world of Korean Buddhism, as well as the special guests who had gathered at Su Dok Sah, will speak at this event. (The evening of the 29th will feature entertainment and a special meal.)

A 7 Day Tour of the Country and Its Historic Temples

will take place from August 30 to September 5. Korea's temples are a unique cultural, historical, and architectural testimony to a glorious Buddhist civilization. Haein-sa temple has the "Tripitaka Koreana," the entire Buddhist canon carved in 1251 A.D., on 81,137 blocks of wood; near Bulguk-sa temple is the Sokkuram Buddha, perhaps the finest achievement of Buddhist sculpture in the Far East; Naksan-sa temple has the largest statue of Kwanseum Bosal (Kuan-yin) in Asia right on the edge of the sea...the tour will also include visits to the museums and other significant sites within the city of Seoul.

For further information on the Korean trip, including details of travel arrangements and cost, please write to the Kwan Um Zen School, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864, or call (401) 769-6476.

Q. When you have a retreat and have interviews with your students, do you use koans?

Kwong Roshi: No, we don't have koan practice.

Soen Sa Nim: Nowadays, a little bit.

Kwong Roshi (laughing): A little bit.

Q. So what happens in your interviews?

Kwong Roshi: There are many questions. I may ask a question, a student may ask a question. Therefore the students teach me. Many things appear with this kind of intimacy.

Q. What is your daily schedule at Sonoma Mountain?

Kwong Roshi: We looked at your schedule here and it's basically the same. Residents, getting up in the morning, zazen, samu [work practice], eating together, same.

Q. How many people are there?

Kwong Roshi: We have a small community right now, either 12 or 15 including the children there. Most of the people live in the valley, and some people come all the way from San Francisco, especially for Saturdays, our big day. Sunday's a day off. Every month we have sesshin, either a one-day or a three- or a five-day.

A friend suggested to me that I should teach school, so I went to Suzuki Roshi and asked him. He said, "You're not a good teacher." (laughter) Right away, "He's a no-good teacher." Then he asked me how much money I would be making. [When he heard the answer] he said maybe I should teach in school. (laughter)

So even though I wasn't a very good teacher, I began to learn a lot. I was out front. Later on, when I went to the training period, I gave talks. Actually it's not been very long since I started. Sometimes your teacher will ask you [to teach] and you don't want to, and sometimes when you want to, the teacher will not ask you. Somehow it works together.

Q. Will you talk a little bit about experiences you had with Suzuki Roshi, and something about how you feel about the student-teacher relationship?

Kwong Roshi: I've always been more traditional. Whatever Suzuki Roshi said, I didn't fight against it. Maybe my projection was big. Whatever he said, I would try to do, try to work with. Maybe it was my upbringing.

As for teaching, there were the Dharma talks in the zendo, but my struggle was just

to stay awake and [deal with] pain in my legs—that was about the first seven or eight years. My mind can't remember his teaching, but maybe my body and my ears could remember. It wasn't until later when I began giving talks that my mind began to be used more. For a long time I don't think my mind was being used because of my misunderstanding of what the practice is.

The teaching was very everyday, just like with your own teacher when you go to Boston or drive in the car with him. Sometimes you think it [teaching] should happen in your retreat or some brilliant flash, but many times it'll be at home by yourself or with him—driving a car, cooking together, something very ordinary.

One of the stories I remember was when my family and I lived in Mill Valley across the bridge from the San Francisco Zen Center. In Japantown the Zen Center was then called Soko-ji. In order to keep me practicing with the sangha, Suzuki Roshi asked me to cook in the morning. I would come for zazen and then cook breakfast, and then go to work. One morning I was cooking and he had this very special teacup on a very long table. My job, after we finished eating, was to get all the dishes and wash them. This time I was probably in a hurry and I had two teacups, one in my hand and the other one was this special one on the table. As I was getting it, it slipped out of my hand. I knew it was a very special cup, so I put the other cup down and went to catch it as the special cup fell through the back of the chair, but I missed. It broke into a million pieces, just shattered.

Suzuki Roshi was at one sink and Katarigiri Roshi was at the other sink, and they both went "Ohhhhhh....oh...." (laughter) I said, "Oh my goodness, this is terrible!" And they went "Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh" like a chorus. Then Suzuki Roshi said, "No problem." (laughter) No problem, right? But inside I still had a problem, because I wanted to fix it. I picked up all the pieces, thinking maybe I could glue it together, because it was worth a lot of money. After I picked it all up, Suzuki Roshi took all the pieces and dumped them into a paper bag and shoved it deeply down into the garbage can. It was just the way he did it, shoved it deeply down into the garbage can, that my attachment disappeared. No problem, finally. The next day Mrs. Suzuki asked Roshi, "What happened to the temple treasure?" Roshi said that he had mistakenly broken it. I was so relieved and thankful!

Just simple things like that, I'm sure you experience and know when it happens, or after the happening, that it's very good.

Q. During all your years of training and being at Sonoma Mountain, you also raised a family, four sons. We were talking today about how there aren't very many instructions for doing all that. Could you say anything about that?

Kwong Roshi: Laura, do you want to say something?

Laura Kwong: (laughing) Actually, people have asked us many times how we did it. When I look at it, I realize it was immense, but I didn't actually think about it too much. You just do it day by day. The first thing to realize is that there is no model. You learn as you go along. If you make it into a problem, then it becomes a problem. [It helps] if you make it into a situation that you simply have to deal with. You don't have the solutions. Nobody does. It's just like becoming anything—we don't know. Even Buddhism here in America is a question.

All I realized was to take care of the children when I could, to sit when I could, just to do my best. Did you want something more practical...?

Kwong Roshi: Becoming parents is like student and teacher. For American teachers [of Buddhism], this is our first time. Then for children or students, this is their first time, too. So we make mistakes, back and forth. So let's help each other. It's just the first time, you know.

Laura Kwong: I don't know how this relates to Zen, but I feel my having four sons was Karmic. Having four sons and having to take care of them was very, very deep practice for me. It wasn't so much about taking care of my sons—I don't know whose sons they were, actually. I mean

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VEN. CHOGYAM TRUNGPA, RINPOCHE INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST LEADER DIES IN NOVA SCOTIA



The Vidyadhara (a Sanskrit title meaning "holder of great insight"), the Venerable Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, an international Buddhist leader whose teaching attracted thousands of Western students, died in Halifax, Nova Scotia on April 4. He was 47 years old. He had moved to Halifax last year to establish a new international headquarters for his work, previously based in Boulder, CO.

Thousands of people attended the cremation ceremony held at Karne-Choling on May 26. It was the first time that the traditional Tibetan funeral rites for a high Tibetan lama were performed in North America. The rites were presided over by His Holiness Dingo Khyentse Rinpoche, His Holiness Shamar Rinpoche and other major teachers of the Kagyu Order of Tibetan Buddhism, including the Vajra Regent Osel Tendzin, the American student empowered in 1976 to be Ven. Trungpa Rinpoche's dharma heir, or spiritual successor.

Among those attending were religious leaders and diplomats, United Nations ambassadors, and Buddhists from around the world, including many members of Vajradhatu. The traditional ceremonies were held in a large meadow on the Karne-Choling land and featured a processional to the cremation site accompanied by monks playing Tibetan horns, reed instruments and drums.

The Ven. Trungpa Rinpoche was noted for his intense energy and creativity. He founded Vajradhatu, an international association of more than 100 Buddhist meditation and study centers in North America

and Europe, and Naropa Institute in Boulder, CO, an innovative accredited liberal arts college combining Eastern and Western fields of study. His work at Naropa attracted major intellectual and artistic figures and became the focus for an annual conference on Christian and Buddhist contemplation. He founded Shambhala Training, the United States Committee of the United Nations Lumbini Project, and was a founder of the American Buddhist Congress.

Born in 1940 in eastern Tibet, he was recognized at 18 months, in accordance with Tibetan tradition, as the eleventh rebirth of the historically important Trungpa lineage, and enthroned at the age of five as Supreme Abbot of the Surmang monasteries and governor of the district. Years of intensive training in the Tibetan monastic tradition followed. In 1959, during the Communist Chinese invasion of Tibet, he escaped to India, eventually studying at Oxford and founding a meditation center in Scotland. He gave up his monastic vows in 1968 and subsequently married an English woman. In 1970 he moved to Boulder, CO, and established Karma Dzong Meditation Center (currently one of the largest Buddhist communities in America) and Karne-Choling, a contemplative center in Barnet, VT.

A prolific author whose work has been translated into 11 languages, Ven. Trungpa Rinpoche wrote 11 books, including the widely read "Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism" and "The Myth of Freedom," an autobiography called "Born in Tibet" and most recently, "Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior." □

A great teacher has died.
Not one to compromise his teaching
in order to avoid controversy,
he inspired many to pursue
the way of clarity and compassion.
As we mourn his death—
where did he go?

Heaven?
Hell?
Earth?
Sky?
Where? Where?

KATZ!

With folded hands, facing to North.
Jacob T. Perl
Abbot, Kwan Um Zen School

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deeply, I do not know. As I start maturing in my practice, I realize that I don't know a lot of things. Somehow I was gifted with these four sons, and when I started practicing, it was because I went to Suzuki Roshi and asked him how to take care of my children, and what being a mother was. I didn't know how and I was scared.

Somehow I realized that if that was the place where I was so frightened of losing the self, then that was the place I ought to be. For many years I used that as my practice, and didn't care what it looked like from the outside. If somebody says, "Oh, are you practicing?", I know I'm practicing something and not just taking care of children. It's relative and absolute: are you really taking care of children, or are you taking care of the Buddha?

I rather look at it as though I am giving my whole heart to the Buddha, and it comes in the form of children, my children. (laughter) So that very specific situation was a catalyst for me and a place where I started with a lot of devotion. I used that situation, I cornered myself in that situation in the same sense as you would if you were sitting in zazen: no exit.

"Are you really taking care of children, or are you taking care of the Buddha?"

Q. If somebody came to you and said, "I want to start a Zen Center," what would you tell them?

Kwong Roshi: It depends who the person was.

Q. Oh, a very clear Zen Master.

Kwong Roshi: A very clear Zen Master? Then why ask me? (laughter) What's the problem?

Q. Because he doesn't know anything about America and you've been in America most of your life, so....

Kwong Roshi: Maybe it's better not to say anything. That person has beginner's mind, it's open....In the Zen climate in America, a lot of monks want to open up temples,

not sitting groups, and it's not that simple.

Q. There have been a lot of problems.
Kwong Roshi: Yes, it's a very deep thing and I myself asked Suzuki Roshi [if I could] do the very same thing. But actually I wasn't ready. It's a very deep thing, because you sit with people, and later on they'll be asking you questions. If you can handle all that, it's fine. But it should be done in a very thorough way for American Zen students or disciples.

Q. Recently we have heard about difficult times at the San Francisco Zen Center with teacher-student relationships. Is there anything in this experience that's a lesson for us as Zen students or in terms of being correct students?

Kwong Roshi: It's a hard question, how to be correct students. In one way, we should definitely be able to talk to each other and mirror each other, regardless of whether we become very big or small. To have that kind of channel open is very important. It's also a very good time when these things happen. The puritanical way of looking at things is very strong in this country. That's our karma reflecting. That is coming out so we can take a look at it. It's a very good time, and also it's a painful time, a lot of "pulling the [dead] grass."

Q. How was it for you when Suzuki Roshi died?

Kwong Roshi: It was awful because I relied on him. I believed in him more than I believed in myself. It was more awful than I think I would admit. At least my idea then was to be a strong Zen student, to go straight [practicing] or be strong. But actually it was a very sad and big loss. For myself, my own karmic life, to [be] cut off from Roshi, was a teaching. It was the last teaching. You cannot be attached. I think after he died, I began understanding more and feeling closer than when he was alive. For the first ten years I didn't know him that well. It was only afterward, because I was trying somewhat to do what he was

doing. Knowing why he was doing these things, I become very close in that way. Your teacher Soen Sa Nim is still alive; please appreciate this.

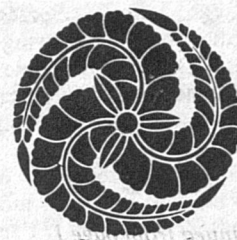
Kwong Roshi: When Soen Sa Nim says, "cut thinking" (like when you're sitting zazen), there are only two things in operation: your awareness and perception. The other three skandhas have dropped off (form, sensation, discrimination). The only thing left is perception and awareness. When you join them, then I know someone



Photo By Ruth Klein

just walked in with a gray robe on and that's Richard. But when they're not quite joined yet, you have the awareness of only "someone," a real subtle awareness of just one thought, but no sequentialness. That's "not-thinking." If it goes to thinking or sleeping, that's the scenery of zazen. There's no judgment of "this is better than that." This is what I would call "no thought," the vastness of no thought.....

By becoming aware of whatever exactly is happening in your zazen, your spiritual practice will mature. That's a very peaceful place. Your body feels like a mountain, immovable, and there's hardly any thinking because body and mind are one. Sometimes there are many thoughts, sometimes there is



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sleepiness, but neither one is better than the other. They're all just scenery of zazen. Because if "this" is better, you become more attached to "this."

This is what is happening in the present, this is genjo. When you acknowledge what is happening in the present, you are awake. You have to be there! Even before being, that's Zen!!!

Q. You encourage people to take that sitting mind into action, like going to work or being with their families, but how do you take that from sitting to your everyday life? How do you teach that?

Kwong Roshi: That's the most difficult. There's the possibility that if it exists here in this one room, then it could also exist outside. So you just find yourself in action (which is the most difficult thing), within everyday life, doing things wholeheartedly. You're not thinking about breathing or posture—it's just happening wholeheartedly. It's an attitude. It can take a long time, or it can even happen within an instant; that's prajna. [wisdom]

Q. You've been practicing for 24 years or so. Could you comment on whether you see any difference between the motivation that started you practicing, and the motivation that keeps you practicing now, years later?
Kwong Roshi: I don't think there's much improvement. (laughter) It's basically the same thing. For me in particular, it [the motivation] is suffering. It's just the same thing as the Scotty dog. It happens very early [in our life]. We don't change that much, you know. I see it, not only in the Scotty dog, but now in other people's faces and my own. It keeps me going. There's something about "improvement" which is also puritanical. "When we study, we're really going to become this being"...

But actually you don't improve that much. At the bottom line, suffering is still the same. You have to deal with it, but maybe you can deal with it in a more wholehearted way. That's what we call compassion; without suffering there is no compassion. □